



Children's Treatment Network

Building Brighter Futures Together

Toilet Training Strategies for Children with Sensory or Behavioural

Sensory and behavioural challenges can impact the toilet training process.

Here are some strategies to accommodate specific challenges.

<p>Fear of toilet, and/or need for familiar environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use potty from home, and/or smaller toilet/reducer ring. • Hold a comforting object. • Take a picture of child sitting on home toilet and another when sitting on school toilet (with clothes on). • Pictures may be used as part of social story or visual schedule.
<p>Fear of closing door or being alone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gradually decrease assistance. Start with adult standing next to child gradually move towards the door, behind the door and outside the bathroom with the door open, and then gradually close the door. • Provide verbal cues to reassure.
<p>Fear of water</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow the child to get used to sitting on the toilet with the toilet lid closed. • Sit on the toilet with diaper on to become used to the toilet. • Use a reducer ring to decrease the opening • Place toilet paper on the surface of the water to decrease splashes.
<p>Sensitivities to bathroom sounds/smells/touch (e.g. pipes, echoes, floors)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run the tap. The sound of running water may be calming and may muffle other noisy bathroom sounds. • Be aware of noise of automatic toilet flushers and hand dryers. • Remove any scented products from the bathroom.
<p>Sensitivities to flushing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only flush when there is something in the toilet. • Set up a verbal flushing cue or warning such as "Ready, set, flush!" to make sure the child knows when to expect the sound. • Start flushing with the child away from the toilet (standing at the door) and encourage them to move them closer as they become more comfortable with the sound. • Let the child also practice flushing outside of toilet time. Headphones may be worn to muffle sounds.

CONNECT WITH US



www.ctnsy.ca

[@CTNKids](https://www.facebook.com/CTNKids)

[@CTNKids](https://twitter.com/CTNKids)



Children's Treatment Network

Building Brighter Futures Together

Toilet Training Strategies for Children with Sensory or Behavioural

<p>Sensitivities to bathroom lights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn off the lights if possible. • Cover the ceiling light with a cover. • Wear sunglasses if needed.
<p>Sensitivities to toilet paper</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace toilet paper with softer tissues or flushable wipes .
<p>Over-interest in flushing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physically cover the flusher to remove it from the child's sight. • Give the child a washable toy to hold while on the toilet to keep hands busy and away from the flusher. • Use a visual schedule to ensure that the child understands when it is time to flush.
<p>Over-interest in toilet water</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the toilet seat down until the child is ready to use it. • Give the child a washable toy to hold to help distract them.
<p>Over-interest in toilet paper</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the toilet paper roll and replace it with tissues. • Roll out the desired amount prior to the child's use. • Determine the number of squares they are to use each wipe.
<p>Difficulties with transitioning to the bathroom</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a visual of the toilet as an indicator of where the child is expected to go. This may be used as part of a visual schedule. • Have a toilet toy that is related to the bathroom theme that they are given when it's time to use the toilet. • Use a social story as needed.
<p>Unaware of being wet or soiled</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage wearing underwear at home rather than diaper to increase sensation of being wet. • If needed, wear underwear underneath diaper to help increase feeling of wetness. • Rubber pants can be worn over underwear to reduce accidents as needed.



Children's Treatment Network

Building Brighter Futures Together

Toilet Training Strategies for Children with Physical Challenges

Difficulties with strength, endurance, range of motion, posture and fine motor skills can all impact the toilet training process. In certain cases, a child's motor skill level may make it difficult to control bladder and bowel movements.

These situations often involve the child's doctor along with the school-based occupational therapist (OT) or support. Here are some strategies to accommodate specific issues:

<p>No pattern in emptying bladder or bowel movements identified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try increasing the child's fluid intake to increase the need to go to the bathroom during the day. • If constipation is occurring, the child's doctor should be consulted about strategies .
<p>Difficulties with balance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment such as grab bars, a wide based step stool, or a ring reducer may be recommended by the OT. • Ensure that height of toilet, sink, soap and towels are accessible. • For more physically involved clients please consult with an OT.
<p>Poor aim</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start with urinating while sitting first. A reducer ring with a front shield may be helpful. • When standing give the child a target in the toilet bowl such as a Cheerio or toilet bowl sticker. • Add food colouring to the water and encourage the child to watch the water change colour as they empty their bladder into the toilet. • Encourage leaning forward to help direct the stream.
<p>Lack of sensation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try habit training – schedule urinating at the same time everyday.
<p>Difficulties with hand skills, strength, range of motion, coordination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear loose fitting or easy to manage clothing (no zippers/buttons). • Work with the OT to address hand strength and skills. • Flushable wipes may be used. • Encourage the child to wipe until the toilet paper is no longer soiled.

CONNECT WITH US



www.ctnsy.ca

[@CTNKids](https://www.facebook.com/CTNKids)

[@CTNKids](https://twitter.com/CTNKids)